(ii) Construction of retirement from 61st Km. of Brahamaputra Dyke from Silghat in Dhing to Hiloikonda—Cost Rs. 197 lakhs.

Non-acceptance of Kuwaiti Deenar in Indian Banks

1829. SHRI THOMAS KUTHIRA VATTOM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Kuwaiti Deenar is not being accepted/exchanged in Indian banks due to the invasion of Iraq in that country; and

(b) what are the financial restrictions thrust upon Indian citizens working in Kuwait regarding exchange of currency and the operation of bank accounts?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) and (b) The Reserve Bank of India/Government of India have not issued any directive to Authorised Dealers to stop dealing in Kuwaiti Deenar or any of the Gulf currencies. In view of the political uncertainty in the Middle East, it has been reported that internationally Gulf currencies are not being accepted. However, with a view to alleviating the problems that may be encountered by non-resident Indians returning from Gulf countries in encashment of currency notes and travellers' cheques denominated in Gulf currencies viz., Kuwaiti Deenar, Bahrain Deenars, Omani Riyals, Saudi Riyals and UAE Dirhams, the exchange counters of Authorised Dealers at the international airports have been authorised by the Reserve Bank of India to permit conversion facility for these currencies equivalent upto Rs. 5,000/- per passport.

Trade with Hungry

1830. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the major items on which Indo-Hungarian bilateral trades have been established;

(b) whether Government propose to expand bilateral trade with that country; and

(c) if so, what are the new areas identified for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN): (a) The Indo-Hungarian trade is being conducted on the basis of payments in any freely convertible currency. The major items of Indian exports to Hungary have been iron ore pellets, leather and leather manufactures, engineering goods including consumer electronic items, textile items including readymade garments, drugs and pharmaceuticals. The main items of import from Hungary have been chemicals and plastic chemicals, pulses, iron and steel products, and machinery items like railway equipment and power equipment.

(b) and (c) Both the Governments are keen to expand and diversify the trade. New items added in the range of exports from India to Hungary include iron ore pellets, consumer electronics, Maruti Cars and Mopeds, paints, toys, drugs and pharmaceuticals. New items added in the import list include automotive components, chemicals and plastic chemical products and rolled steel products. In addition, possibilities exist in the matter of setting up of joint ventures, particularly in the hotel sector in the territory of Hungary.

Cases being contested by Punjab National Bank, Calcutta

1831. PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1683 given in the Rajya

Sabha on the 24th May, 1990 and state :

(a) whether those cases which were started against the owners of taxis and cars in the year 1985 and 1986 had been resolved with the receipt of payments that were due against most of them ;

(b) whether a few of the owners of such vehicles did not agree to pay the exorbitant legal fees levied in such cases ;

(c) whether the bank has been still contesting those cases for realisation of legal dues ;

(d) if so, what are the details of expenditure so far incurred against each such case ; and

(e) what further action is being proposed to be taken in the matter ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and to the extent available will be laid on the Table of the House.

Problems being faced by Tea Industry

1832. SHRI JAGADISH JANI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the problems being faced by the Tea Industry at present ;

(b) if so, the steps taken to sort out these incidence of taxation and the availability of ceiling surplus land ; and

(c) the stand taken by the Tea Board on these issues ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government of India have taken several steps to overcome the problems posed by incidence of taxation and non-availability of ceiling surplus land. These steps include: introduction of Tea Development Account Scheme, excise duty rebate on exports of bulk tea, complete exemption of excise duty rebate on exports of packet teas, exemption of excise duty on tea bags, formulation of Plantation Development Coordination Committee, etc. These matters have also been taken up with the State Governments concerned.

Supply of pig iron to Saran Engineering Company by Steel Authority of India Limited

1833. PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1643 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th May, 1990 and state :

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India Limited had by its letter dated the 5th August, 1981 agreed to supply pig iron @ 250 MT per month to one Saran Engineering Company Limited, a Government managed company, to enable it to keep up its commitments to priority sectors, including defence industries ;

(b) whether arrangements were made for the supply of given material from Bokaro Steel Plant ;

(c) whether the Bokaro Steel Plant had failed to keep the schedule of supplies ;

(d) whether the company has been requesting to reduce the supply to 100 MT only per month in view of the shortages being experienced by Bokaro Steel Plant :

(e) if so, what are the details